



National Brownfields Assessment Pilot

Lowell, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

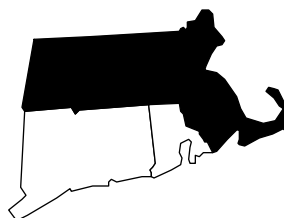
PILOT BACKGROUND

EPA selected the City of Lowell for a Brownfields Pilot. There is very little undeveloped land remaining in Lowell, making redevelopment of abandoned industrial sites necessary to stimulate economic revitalization in the community. Lowell is ethnically diverse, with a 23 percent minority population, and economically depressed, with a declining population, 18 percent poverty rate, and an unemployment rate that has increased 50 percent over the last eight years. Lowell has been designated a Federal Enterprise Community. Many of the brownfields are located near low-income residential neighborhoods. Attracting businesses to reuse these sites is needed to reduce the residential tax burden and create jobs. The City has had some success in redeveloping brownfields, but suspected contamination at many sites has made it difficult to attract developers.

OBJECTIVES

Through this brownfields effort, Lowell plans to organize a long-term program to identify and develop brownfields, educate the community about brownfields, and develop and document strategies for encouraging corporate investment in brownfields projects over time. Lowell intends to focus efforts on overcoming key obstacles to brownfields

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Lowell, Massachusetts

Date of Award:
September 1996

Amount: \$200,000

Site Profile: The Pilot targets an industrial area near the Merrimack River. Previous uses include an ash dump, gasoline station, vehicle maintenance facility, and textile mills. Some of the targeted area is associated with a new stadium and arena complex.

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<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

redevelopment already identified by the City in previous brownfield projects and documenting the effective strategies that could be used by other communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Completed the Phase II site assessments for the two properties associated with the new Lowell Stadium and Tsongas Arena.

The Pilot is:

- Prioritizing remaining brownfields sites in the City, in order to choose 3 to 4 additional sites for in-depth assessment. The City will solicit community impact into prioritization of the sites.
- Conducting Phase I site assessments on approximately 10 high priority sites;
- Conducting Phase II site assessments on approximately 4 additional high priority sites; and
- Implementing a new, comprehensive brownfield education program in the impacted communities.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Lowell Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the following.

- Construction of two new facilities, the Lowell Stadium and Tsongas Arena, is currently underway.
- The City plans to develop a Funding Strategy Assistance Document to aid other communities by describing innovative funding strategies that have been used by the City.